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IMPLEMENTATION OF MARKETING STRATEGY OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN ENHANCING CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN DISRUPTION ERA

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ABSTRACT

This research explains the implementation of marketing strategy in determining products, price, place, and promotion of Islamic education in enhancing customer loyalty in disruption era. The result showed that firstly, Islamic education products can be accepted by customers since the products in madrasa provide opportunity for students to grab achievements. Secondly, the strategy of determining Islamic education price is an alternative for customers who wish education cost was affordable. Thirdly, the strategy of determining Islamic education places reveals that there is a lot of expectations from customers that madrasa should have dormitory or product development of boarding school; therefore, it can be a solution for students whose homes are far from school. Fourthly, the strategy of determining Islamic education promotion is by conducting dissemination of information in educational institutions to introduce the products, price, and existence of madrasa.

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INTRODUCTION

Implementation of marketing strategy of Islamic education plays an important role in introducing institutions to customers. Marketing of Islamic education must always be a series of activities in showing the existence of madrasa to make it well-known by community. The marketing should pay attention to the development of science and technology so that community can identify the expectations and goals of Islamic educational institutions. To make it well-known, Islamic educational institutions must prepare marketing strategy using relevant concepts that fit the customers' needs. Bley & Kuehn (2003), market in the marketing field is essential to do business transactions. Business activities – one of them is in banking field – must also go through a proper system. Expectations from business transactions are relevant to the future goals, that is, the achievement of goals as well as the establishment of business activities in a systematic way; thus, the business can be competitive in advanced era. Business is one of the ways to create success in any fields.

Organizational behavior in marketing must be along with cooperation with internal party of an institution. In performing marketing strategy of an institution, each member of work partners in marketing team must do their duties and functions. Involvement of each member in marketing products must

correspond to the agreed plans (Newman & Jahdi, 2009). Competency of marketing team plays a vital role in succeeding the marketing in an institution. Sandikci (2011), marketing in Islamic view must concern on environmental approach and human resource. One of the criteria in determining success of marketing is by adopting varied strategies. Varied strategies in marketing are essential in affecting satisfaction level of customers. In running marketing activities, human resource always focuses on the future goals so that the activities can be accepted by all parties.

Connection between marketing and community must be built to create an excellent cooperation. Indicators of connection between community and education include quality of education, character education, and social activity. Social activity performed by educational institutions must be in line with the plan (Anwar, 2018; Sujianto & Suryanto, 2018). The success of educational institutions in maintaining their connection with community who has social approach is attained by doing educational marketing. Marketing strategy can be developed in any fields; one of them is in banking. In running marketing strategy, institutions must prioritize their optimal service. Effective marketing must adopt technology and information to be able to develop network and connection with customers (Amin & Isa, 2008). A decent service must be the

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prime concern of institutions in running their marketing strategy to enhance customer satisfaction.

Customer loyalty in marketing is a main indicator of success of marketing strategy. Steps in carrying out activities of marketing strategy must consider customer loyalty. Quality educational service is one of the priorities and becomes an aspect to determine the success of marketing (Siddiqi, 2011). Also, competition in marketing strategy among institutions is unique. Marketing and service in enhancing the quality of customers is one of the indicators of success in education. Customer loyalty can be created by adopting suitable marketing strategy according to the needs. The level of success of educational institutions in running educational marketing is basically to improve customer loyalty (Mazzarol, 1998). Aspects related to customer loyalty is one of the concerns for the advancement of educational institutions in the future.

The advancement of era is marked by the development of technology and information as the competing aspect in marketing field. A tight and sustainable competition makes marketing world prepare proper plans to be able to compete equitably. Realization of marketing activities in technology and information era is expected to concern on the best service (Hassan *et al*, 2018). Various sectors in developing cooperation among institutions are highly needed to advance marketing field. Islamic educational institution is an institution that focuses on learning with Islamic approach. Fundamentally, Islamic education is a transformation of science between educators and students by adopting relevant methods (Hashim & Jemali, 2017). In providing service to customers, Islamic education must be able to prepare any criteria needed by customers.

Marketing concept is a series of criteria that must be implemented systematically to introduce a new product. Marketing of education has a novel role in developing education in Indonesia. Marketing model of education must be adjusted to varied theories to make it become a specific guideline in creating success. Achievement of goals in marketing of education must be together with loyalty of education customers, in general (Durkin *et al*, 2012). Marketing in advanced era encountered some competitions in getting customers. Today, Islamic educational institutions must make efforts to regulate strategies systematically regarding the marketing. An organization which rules education climate and serves customers must always concentrate on the customers' needs. Realization of education marketing strategies can be felt by its customers based on the level of educational needs (Faturojji, 2015).

A proper marketing strategy must be designed with some innovations to create a specialty of an institution. The early steps in marketing of Islamic education is by preparing careful plans that suit the customers' level of needs. Marketing is a process either social or managerial between groups and individuals to introduce and offer a suitable product. One of the marketing goals is to enhance customer loyalty, notably the customers of Islamic education (Khasanah, 2015). Planning in terms of Islamic education marketing must always be a top priority in achieving the future success. Marketing strategy highly focuses on planning to ease activities that fit the expectations, and it must be implemented systematically. The

goal of Islamic education marketing is to introduce any products that have been existing in an institution so that the products can be widely known by customers. Customer loyalty in using the product should also be taken into account by Islamic educational institutions (Faizin, 2017).

Steps in regulating education marketing strategies have undergone challenges and competitions among the existing institutions. In essence, implementation of the strategies is one of the activities in performing promotions to customers. The primary goal of educational marketing is to provide good services to customers by introducing a product including its use. Approach between educational institutions and customers should be done well to interlace work partners (Soegoto *et al*, 2014). Educational institutions must plan programs that suit marketing strategies in determining the level of success in the future. A range of activities in educational institutions essentially lies in the future achievements and prepares their products to be promoted to customers. Marketing activities should concern on balance between product offer and loyalty level (Anam, 2013; Sujianto & Azmi, 2020).

An approach in educational marketing strategies is known as marketing mix. Marketing mix is a series of systematic criteria covering diverse components such as product, price, promotion, place, human resource, infrastructure, and educational service management (Supriyani & Susilo, 2016). Expectations from educational marketing strategies is customer loyalty in using products of educational institutions. Kuswanto *et al*, (2018), marketing strategies in educational institutions have the potentials to be developed in the future. A wide range of steps must be gone through well to create marketing that fits the goal. One of the indicators of success of educational institutions regarding marketing strategy is surely customer loyalty; the customers use the products of an institution as fine as they can.

Marketing field now has several roles in many sectors; one of them is in Islamic educational institutions. Marketing strategy is a mechanism to create activities of distributing goods and services to customers by creating, distributing, determining prices, and running promotion activities. Marketing management is a mechanism that begins with **6** planning and implementation, ideas, price definition, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services with the purpose of creating mutual exchange between individuals and organizations. Cooperation in marketing determines the level of success in the future; therefore, the suitability of goods and services, as well as geographical location in marketing will affect the implementation of marketing itself.

Marketing is a set of activities that is initiated with determining products, quantity of the products, price of the products, distribution mechanism, promotion strategies, etc. In marketing, there is an interaction between companies and consumers in which the companies provide goods and services to consumers. Meanwhile, customers give money as a reward on the fast and satisfactory fulfillment of their needs based on their demands (Gitosudarmo, 2001). Producers and customers are a unity who have to maintain the quality of goods and services as the objects of marketing.

Educational marketing strategies must concentrate on some rules to make them easily accepted by customers. The duties of Islamic education marketing is regulating strategies, making

plans of marketing activities, and creating integrated marketing concept map to be able to generate, communicate, and bring about values to the customers of educational institutions. Marketing mix of education is a way of facilitating marketing activities that consists of four P's: product, price, place, and promotion (Kotler & Keller, 2009). In the developing technology and information age, in addition to tight competitions, an organization must concentrate on the quality of products. Education is a thing that must be paid attention to, notably regarding the quality of education as the top priority. It is an effort done consciously with careful planning to achieve the stated goals. Therefore, the effort must focus on enhancing quality and it will be interconnected in learning process of which the goal is about the better quality of education (Hanik, 2011).

Before marketing science was well-established, companies always focused on limitless production without marketing concept balance; therefore, the production grew fast. In that situation, companies had yet to know marketing science so that they could not consider their profits from the products. Nonetheless, the products could be distributed to customers. Numerous companies in that time suffered loss (Kasmir & Jakfar, 2015). The research conducted the present study which concerned marketing of Islamic education in enhancing customer loyalty in disruption era. This multi-site case study – taking place at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) Temboro and Takeran, Magetan – was influenced by the fact that Islamic education is currently an alternative for customers to trust their children education in madrasa. This research aims at explaining marketing strategies in both Islamic schools to be able to communicate with customers and some institutions to enhance customer loyalty in disruption era.

Based on the research context, it is clear that the existence of madrasa has indicated development and advancement, either in terms of learning, science, or achievement. Referring to the result of observation at MAN Temboro and MAN Takeran, Magetan, the Islamic schools have obtained several achievements contributed by students. Achievement is the evidence that madrasa has become the priority for parents to trust their further children education, as well as to bring them to achievement. In particular, this study is conducted to answer four research questions: (1) How is the implementation of determining products of Islamic education in enhancing loyalty?; (2) How is the implementation of determining price of Islamic education in enhancing loyalty?; (3) How is the implementation of determining place of Islamic education in enhancing loyalty?; and (4) How is the implementation of determining promotion of Islamic education in enhancing loyalty?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research method adopted by the researchers in this study was qualitative approach. Theoretically, qualitative studies focus on a systematic description based on the real situation in the field. In addition, qualitative studies analyze data accurately so that it can be structured systematically. The data were collected through in-depth interview, participant observation, and documentation. Data analysis process covered data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing, and multi-case analysis

(Sugiyono, 2018). Validity of the data was ensured by using triangulation method.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The strategy of determining Islamic education products at MAN Temboro was by performing a set of activities of introducing the school's products to customers. In enhancing customer loyalty in disruption era, MAN Temboro defined price which is in harmony with the customers' needs. Price in education is no longer a barometer that concludes choices in building customer loyalty.

In determining place, MAN Temboro adopted marketing strategy of Islamic education as it is the customers' expectation. As Islamic educational institutions, madrasa that further becomes a preference must go through diverse activities in introducing themselves to customers. Geographical location of Islamic educational institutions will be the main concern of community. In doing promotion activities, MAN Temboro needed work partners which are able to connect one school to other schools in creating good network.

At MAN Takeran, marketing of Islamic education was one of the efforts in introducing their products to customers. Each program must be varied to attract customers; it is an aspect of determining a choice. In price mechanism, MAN Takeran looked at some criteria: quality and quantity. In the developing technology and information era, there are many competitions regarding the price of education.

Similar to MAN Temboro, MAN Takeran adopted marketing strategy of Islamic education in determining place as it is the customers' expectation. Marketing of madrasa is one of noble ways to provide services to student candidates, community, or customers who will use the service of an educational institution. Diverse promotion activities was also one of the priorities at MAN Takeran in running marketing strategy of Islamic education. The school generated a plan that were further followed up by marketing team. Besides, they proposed a license to disseminate information to junior high schools and Islamic junior high schools.

In general, MAN Temboro and MAN Takeran have implemented 4P strategy, namely Product, Price, Place, and Promotion as the initial step in running marketing strategy of Islamic education to enhance customer loyalty in disruption era. The result showed that products in both MAN Temboro and MAN Takeran can be developed according to customers' needs and interests; therefore, they can give contribution to the schools' customers. Educational price in madrasa is affordable so that it will provide access to its learning system. Geographical place or location of the schools is easy to be accessed by customers using public transportation. In addition, the existence of boarding school also facilitates customers. Moreover, promotion activities in building cooperation with work partners run according to plan.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates how madrasa implements the strategy of determining product, price, place, and promotion in disruption era; that is, by introducing products or programs in madrasa to customers. The products cover Science Program, Social Studies Program, and Religion Studies Program. These

products are well accepted by customers. In addition, the price offer is affordable. This strategy works effectively; therefore, customers are easy to determine educational price. Place or location of the studied school is strategic so that it is accessible by public and private transportation. Besides, promotion activities among institutions are scheduled. The promotion is performed to enhance customer loyalty, quality of education, and students. The core priority in determining the school place is placing strategy. The strategic location will be the customers' consideration in choosing the school. Moreover, the existence of boarding school next to the school is a solution for students whose homes are from school. The school promotion is scheduled so that it runs effectively.

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